AN
HVMBLE
PETITION
AND
REMONSTRANCE
PRESENTED
Unto both the
High and Honourable Houſes
OF
PARLIAMENT.
CONCERNING
The inſupportable grievance of the
Farthing Tokens.

£2/2/-

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TO
The Right Honourable the Lords now assembled in the High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition and Remonstrance of us whose names are here subscribed of London, Westminster, Middlesex, Southwark, and other places of the Kingdome, in behalfe of themselves and others.

Humbly sheweth,

1 THat *about* 26. *yeares since, King* Iames *of blessed memory, conceiving that Farthing Tokens would bee usefull to the Subjects, and helpfull to the poore, caused some quantities thereof to be made, and committed the care and trust both for the issuing forth and rechanging of them againe to* Iohn *Lord* Harrington, *and afterwards to the Lady* Anne *his wife.*

2. *That* 1. Caroli *the King by his Letters Patents grants unto the Dutchesse of Lenox, and Sir* Francis Crane *the office of making Tokens for the terme of* 17. *yeares, at the rent of one hundred Markes* per annum.

3. *That* 11. Caroli *the King grants the office of making the said Farthings to the Lord* Matravers *and Sir* Francis Crane, *their executors, administrators, and assignes.*

4. *That* 15. Caroli *the King by his Letters Patents grants the office of making the Farthing Tokens to the Lord* Matravers *alone at the rent of foure score pounds* per annum.

5. *That in all the severall Patents their Majesties have declared their gracious intents and pleasures was that the said Farthing Tokens should bee issued forth for the good and ease of the*

Subject, and that without any losse or hindrance at all, or any other inconveniency, and therefore appointed the rechange as well as the exchange thereof.

6. That many of your petitioners have still remaining in their hands great quantities of Farthings unrechanged, which were made and issued forth by the authority of the said Dutches of Lenox and Sir Francis Crane, *and since by the authority of the L.* Matravers *and Sir* Francis Crane, *which your petitioners cannot get to be rechanged, although they have often desired and endeavoured the same, and although all the said Patentees have undertaken and covenanted with his Majesty to rechange them.*

That the allowance of one and twenty shillings in Farthing Tokens for twenty shillings in money, hath beene the chiefest cause of your petitioners great burden, for many covetous persons have usually fetched out great quantities of Farthings, some five pounds at a time, some ten pounds, some more, and forced them in payments upon poore labouring people.

That your petitioners have lost by the rechange of Tokens into the Office some of them fifty pounds, some an hundred pounds, some two hundred pounds, and much more do still daily lose, so that your petitioners are greatly oppressed and dammified in their trading.

That your petitioners have heretofore petitioned to his Majesty for releefe, who was graciously inclined to releeve them, and referred the consideration of their grievances to the Lords of his most Honourable Privie Councell, and their Lordships commiserated your petitioners sufferings, nevertheless they have been no way releeved, whereby they are much impoverished, not able to subsist without redresse, all which in their humble Remonstrance may fully appeare.

Wherefore the petitioners most humbly pray that they may have all their said tokens rechanged, and for ever hereafter freed from this great oppression and trouble, and in the meane time the Office prohibited from issuing forth any Tokens, with such other reparations and releefe for their insupportable losses, as to the great judgement of this Honourable Assembly shall be requisite. And they shall pray, &c.

About five hundred hands subscribed to this Petition.

An humble Remonſtrance concerning the grievance of Farthing tokens.

BLeſſed King JAMES tendring the good of his Subjects, knowing that the richer they grow, the better able they would bee to ſerve him; wiſely conſidered that ſmall monyes would be exceeding helpfull to the poore, and for retailing trades, about the eleventh yeare of his Reigne cauſed a copper coine to be made, and to paſſe under the denomination of a Farthing for the eaſe and benefit of the Subject.

And the Kings Majeſty that now is, hath ever ſince the death of his Royall Father continued the ſame, and to the ſame end, as by their ſeverall Patents and Proclamations may appeare.

Nevertheleſſe it hath beene for a long time, and ſtill is the greateſt oppreſſion that ever was upon the Subject; for put all thoſe inſupportable projects or monopolies that of late yeares hath beene ſet on foote into one end of the ballance, and this grievance of Farthing

tokens into the other end, and it will out weigh them all, unto the Petitioners and to many thouſands more, which for manifeſtation they doe here humbly preſent to the great Judgement of this honourable Aſſembly theſe conſiderable things:

1. The Petitioners inconceivable loſſe.
2. How the ſame is occaſioned.
3. The great benefit the Office makes thereby.
4. The remedie or prevention of this evill for future times.

For the greatneſſe of the loſſe, that it is heavier then all the projects or monopolies, appeares whether conſidered in the Petitioners yearly loſſe or totall ſumme.

The projects for Salt, Sope, Starch, Tobacco, Cards, Pins, Butter, caskes, tranſporting of Leather, Ship-mony, &c. all which, moſt of the Petitioners were loſers by, yet the loſſe of all theſe put together, is not comparable to the Farthings.

For in all theſe to loſe forty ſhillings a yeare, or twenty ſhillings a yeare for each man was much, but this oppreſſion of Farthings is to ſome five pound *per annum*, to ſome eight pound, tenne pound, to ſome twelve pound, fifteen pound *per annum*, and more, enough to bring many thouſands of families to breaking and beggery.

And

And many of theſe great loſers are poore men which never was able to be brought within the liſt of Subſidie or Ship-mony.

And for the totall of the Petitioners loſſes, it is to ſome twenty pound, to ſome forty pound, fifty, to ſome a hundred pound, a hundred and fifty, to ſome two hundred pound and more, ſo that many of the Petitioners have loſt more by tokens then their whole eſtate amounts unto.

Beſides theſe monopolizing oppreſſions of Sope, Ship-money, &c. have beene impoſed of late yeares, but this of Farthing tokens, hath continued for this twenty ſeven yeares and more, and many poore retailing trades men doe loſe as much by them in one year as they are worth.

The ſecond thing to remonſtrate, is how this great oppreſſion is occaſioned.

The firſt occaſion is, in iſſuing forth from the Office one and twenty ſhillings in tokens, for twenty ſhillings in money, which profit intices rich men to fetch them out, ſome forty ſhillings, five pound, ſome ten pound a weeke conſtantly, and in greater ſummes, and forces them in payments upon poore worke men, as if they were hirelings to the Office to ruine the Kingdome

And with theſe tokens poore people come to buy bread

bread, butter, cheeſe, coales, and other neceſſaries, and the Petitioners muſt either take them or leave off trading, then are forced to bring them weekly to the Office, and loſe twelve pence *per* pound, five pound *per centum* at the leaſt.

The ſecond occaſion is, the altering of the ſtampe which hath been done five ſeverall times, and at each alteration tokens have beene left upon the Petitioners hands.

And many of the Petitioners have yet great quantities of old tokens unrechanged, ſome forty ſhillings, five pound, ſome tenne pound, fifteene, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty pound, & more, which the Office refuſe to rechange, although they have beene often required thereunto, and although the patentees have covenanted with his Majeſty to rechange them, as by their ſeverall Patents, and the Kings Proclamations may appear.

The third occaſion is, the abuſe of the Office cauſing the Petitioners daily attendance before they could get their tokens rechanged.

For all the weeke they take to deliver out tokens, and appointed but three dayes a weeke to rechange, and but ſix houres in a day, viz. from eight to eleven in the fore noone, and from one till foure in the after noone, and the greateſt part of that little time was ſpent in delivering out tokens, and the reſt in a trifling rechange of a ſmall quantity, whereby the Petitioners have waited day after day, weeke after weeke, to have their tokens

tokens rechanged, and in the interim want money to manage their trades, for those with whom they have to deale will not be paid in tokens, besides the Office hath cut and defaced many of those tokens which themselves have issued forth, pretending them to be naught.

The third thing to remonstrate, is the great profit which the Patentees doe make by Tokens.

The greatnesse of the profit will appeare upon examination of the quantities of the Farthings, issued forth upon each severall stampe, and of the small summes received in.

For instance, the last stampe of single ringed tokens, it is conceived there was a hundred and twenty thousand pounds made and issued forth; and when the stampe was altered, there was not forty thousand pounds received in againe; so that there must be still in the hands of the subject fourescore thousand pounds at the least, which they could never get to be rechanged.

Now the charge of copper and making of the tokens, is not above five shillings *per* pound, so that the Office gaines fifteene shillings in twenty, which amounts to threescore thousand ponnds *de claro* that they have gotten by one sort of tokens; a farre greater profit then all the Kings Mints of England, Scotland, &c. can make.

For the coinage of fourscore thousand pounds in

 silver

ſilver is but eleven hundred and eleven pounds, three ſhillings foure pence, which properly belongs to the King, out of which he defrayes all the charges of the Mint, except the workmanſhip, which charges being deducted, the King gaines not *de clare* five hundred pounds but in foureſcore thouſand pounds of Tokens, the Office gaines threeſcore thouſand pounds at the leaſt, which ſhewes that the Office of Farthings is more then a hundred times as good as the Mint, quantity for quantity: & out of all this great profit the King hath but foureſcore pounds *per annum* rent: an inconſiderable ſumme for ſo inconceiveable a gaine.

The fourth thing to remonſtrate, is the remedy or prevention of this evill for future times.

For to lay downe the Office will not be convenient, then all retailing trades will want ſmall monies, and the poore relieſe, therefore it is requiſite,

1. That the Office bee ſetled in the power of the Crowne, and not in any ſubject.

2. That there bee ſome neerer proportion betwixt the extrinſeck denomination and the intrinſeck value.

3. That it may be felony either to import or counterfeit them.

4. That no advantage may be allowed upon iſſuing forth any Tokens, and the Office to receive them in upon the like termes.

It may be alledged,

Alleg. 1. If the oppreſſion were ſo great, and of ſuch conti-

continuance as is pretended, it would long ſince have beene complained of.

Anſ. The Petitioners have not beene wanting to their great charge to complaine and ſeeke reliefe, both to King JAMES, and to the Kings Majeſty that now is, and they, graciouſly inclined to releeve them, have ſeverall times referred the ſame to the Lords of the Councell, and by their Lordſhips to ſome Lords Committees, but the Petitioners could never procure any thing to be done therein.

And the Office hath been made acquainted with the Petitioners complaints, and hath given in their anſwers of defence: the chiefe heads whereof wee doe here humbly preſent.

Firſt pretence of the Office.

That the iſſuing forth of one and twenty ſhillings in Tokens for twenty ſhillings in money, and the rechange of one and twenty ſhillings in Tokens for twenty ſhillings in money is warranted by the Kings Patents and Proclamation, ſo that the Office is no way faulty.

Anſw. The King by his ſeverall Patents and Proclamations doth declare that it is his intent and pleaſure that the Farthing Tokens ſhould be an eaſe and benefit to the Subject, and not otherwiſe; but it is an inſufferable oppreſſion, and ſo againſt the Kings minde.

Second

Second pretence.

That to rechange upon the ſame termes as is delivered out, is no damage to any.

Anſ. It is true, if the ſame parties that fetch them out did bring them in, but it is otherwiſe, for the rich fetch them out, and gaine five pounds *per cent.* and the Petitioners bring them in, and loſe five pounds *per cent.* and never fetch out any.

Third pretence.

That the Petitioners knowing the loſſe by rechange, proportion the prizes of their wares accordingly, and ſo are no loſers.

Anſw. It is not ſo: for the Petitioners deliver out their commodities either by weight or meaſure, neither doe they know what money people bring, and when their commodities are cut or weighed out, they muſt take Tokens, or elſe loſe more by taking the commodity againe, and loſe their cuſtomers too.

Beſides, if the Petitioners ſhould proportion their wares according to the loſſe by rechange, then the oppreſſion of the ſubject would bee the greater, for that would inhance the prizes of proviſion, which is the beggering of a Kingdome.

FINIS.